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AMENDMENT

In the Specification:

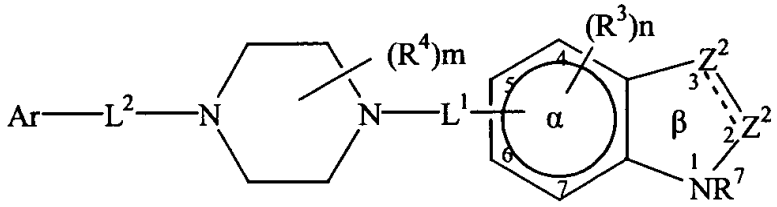
Replace the paragraph on page 10, line 26 to page 11, line 3, with the following:

A is $-W_i-COX_jY$ wherein Y is COR^2 or an isostere thereof and R^2 is a noninterfering substituent. Each of W and X is a spacer and may be, for example, optionally substituted alkylene, alkenylene, or alkynylene, each of i and j is 0 or 1. Preferably, W and X are unsubstituted. Preferably, j is 0 so that the two carbonyl groups are adjacent to each other. Preferably, also, i is 0 so that the proximal CO is adjacent the ring. However, compounds wherein the proximal CO is spaced from the ring can readily be prepared by selective reduction of an initially glyoxal substituted β ring. In the most preferred embodiments of the invention, the α/β ring system is an indole containing CA in position 3- and wherein A is $COCOR^2$.

In the Claims:

Please replace presently pending claim 1 with the following claim 1:

1. (Twice amended) A compound of the formula:



(1)

and the pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof, or a pharmaceutical composition thereof, wherein

⁄ represents a single or double bond;

one Z^2 is CA or CR^8A and the other is CR^1, $CR^1{}_2$, NR^6 or N wherein each R^1, R^6 and R^8 is independently hydrogen or noninterfering substituent;

A is $-W_i-COX_jY$ wherein Y is COR^2 or an isostere thereof and R^2 is hydrogen or a noninterfering substituent, each of W and X is a spacer of 2-6Å which is substituted or unsubstituted alkylene, alkenylene or alkynylene, and each of i and j is independently 0 or 1;

R^7 is H or is optionally substituted alkyl, alkenyl, alkynyl, aryl, arylalkyl, acyl, aroyl, heteroaryl, heteroalkyl, heteroalkenyl, heteroalkynyl, heteroalkylaryl, or is SOR, SO_2R, RCO,